

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 039083 TOSEC 020179
ORIGIN PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSC-05
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DRAFTED BY S/PRS: JMORDWAY
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S/S - O:LRMACFARLANE
-----211638 123209 /53
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL SECRETARY AIRCRAFT IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 039083 TOSEC 020179

FOR CARTER FROM S/PRS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:SOPN, OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS R.)

SUBJECT: TRAVELING PRESS SUMMARY, FEB 21

NO. 33

NEWSPAPERS

1. BALTIMORE SUN - TREWHITT FROM DAMASCUS

TREWHITT REPORTS THAT SPECULATION IN SYRIA IS THAT SYRIAN
POSITION IS HARDENING. SPECULATION FUELED BY STERN
STATEMENT, ALONG WITH CANCELLATION OF VANCE PRESS CON-
FERENCE. US OFFICIALS DENIED ANY RELATIONSHIP.

-- SYRIAN STATEMENT SYMBOLIZED THEIR FLEXIBILITY.

-- SAUDIS HAD BEEN EVEN LESS PRECISE.

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-- SAUDIS APPEAR CONTENT TO LET OTHER PARTIES SET NEGO-
TIATING TERMS, AND THEY WILL HOLD LINE ON OIL PRICES IN
HOPES US WILL RECIPROCATATE WITH PRESSURE ON ISRAEL.

-- UNCERTAIN WHETHER GENEVA REMAINS PRACTICAL.

-- HESITATION BY ARABS ON SADAT PROPOSAL PARTLY COSMETIC, DESIRE TO AWAIT PLO'S CAIRO MEETINGS, AND PARTLY REPRESENTING ARAB FRAGMENTATION.

-- CONDITIONS HAVE IMPROVED, THOUGH, FOR PEACE.

-- VANCE HAS LEARNED A LOT. NEXT COMES HARD PART.

2. NEW YORK TIMES - NO BYLINE, FROM DAMASCUS

REPORTER, PRESUMABLY GWERTZMAN, REPORTS THAT VANCE FOUND SYRIA DOUBTS QUICK PROGRESS CAN BE MADE ON MIDEAST SOLUTION.

-- ASSAD REPORTEDLY TOLD VANCE THAT CHANCES SLIM UNLESS US PUTS PRESSURE ON ISRAEL AFTER ISRAELI ELECTIONS.

-- SYRIAN STATEMENT PROBABLY MATCHED SUBJECTS DISCUSSED PRIVATELY.

-- ASSAD AND VANCE DISCUSSED AT LENGTH PROCEDURAL PROBLEMS SURROUNDING GENEVA CONF.

-- IN RIYADH, VANCE WAS TOLD SAUDIS BELIEVED ARABS WOULD BE FLEXIBLE AND TAKE REASONABLE POSITIONS AT A GENEVA CONF.

-- PRINCE SAUD SOUGHT TO AVOID LINK BETWEEN OIL PRICES AND PEACE IN MIDEAST.

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-- VIEW IN DAMASCUS IS THAT ASSAD WANTS PEACE TO HELP RESTORE SYRIAN ECONOMIC EQUILIBRIUM.

3. WASHPOST - OBERDORFER FROM DAMASCUS

OBERDORFER SAYS SAUDIS HAVE ASKED US TO MOVE TOWARD RECOGNITION OF PLO.

-- SAUDIS AND ASSAD BELIEVE US KEY TO CHANGES IN JERUSALEM.

-- EXTENSIVE QUOTATIONS FROM BOTH VANCE AND SAUD.

-- SOME OF ANTI-BOYCOTT LEGISLATION PENDING IN US WOULD BRING DRASTIC CONSEQUENCES FOR TRADE RELATIONS, SAUDI LEADERS SAID DURING MEETINGS.

-- SAUDIS STRESSED THEIR REQUEST FOR US ACTION ON FINAN-

CIAL PROBLEMS OF LDC'S.

HARTMAN

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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